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FIBA

We Are Basketball

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2006 FIBA CALENDAR

MARCH 2007
31.03 - 02.04   NCAA Men's Final Four in Atlanta, USA

APRIL 2007
01-03.04   NCAA Women's Final Four in Cleveland, USA
tbd   FIBA Asia Championship for Women in Incheon, Korea

JUNE 2007
29.06 - 08.07   FIBA U21 World Championship for Women in Moscow / Moscow Region, Russia

JULY 2007
12-22.07   FIBA U19 World Championship for Men in Vancouver, Canada
19-29.07   FIBA Asia Championship for Men in Tokushima, Japan
26.07 - 05.08   FIBA U19 World Championship for Women in Bratislava, Slovakia

AUGUST 2007
01.08   FIBA Africa Championship for Men in Angola
tbd   FIBA Americas Championship for Men in Venezuela

SEPTEMBER 2007
04 - 16.09   FIBA European Championship for Men in Spain
24.09 - 07.10   FIBA European Championship for Women in Chieti, Italy
tbd   FIBA Oceania Championship for Men
tbd   FIBA Oceania Championship for Women
tbd   FIBA Americas Championship for Women in Valdivia, Chile

OCTOBER 2007
tbd   FIBA World League for Women Final Round in Russia

DECEMBER 2007
tbd   FIBA Africa Championship for Women in Senegal

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BARGNANI: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A YOUNG BIG MAN

by Francesco Vitucci

Francesco Vitucci started his coaching career as a coach of youth teams and then worked as an assistant coach of Reyer Venice (Italy), before becoming head coach in 1993 in the Italian A2 Division. In 1996, after winning the championship and having his team going to the A1 Division, he was elected Coach of the Year of A2 Division. He coached Imola in A2, leading the team to the A1 Division in 1998. From 2001 to 2003 he coached Scafati in A2, and then became assistant coach at the Benetton Treviso, first under Ettore Messina and currently with David Blatt. His teams have won two Italian Cups and the Italian A1 Division title in 2006.

As it was for Andrea Bargnani, the first pick of the Toronto Raptors in the 2006 NBA draft, the development work of a young big man involves special, careful, patient, and wise teamwork that cannot skip over any fundamental components. Following the directions of the head coach (in the case of Bargnani, his coaches were Ettore Messina and then David Blatt), which determines the practical use of the player on the court, it is necessary to integrate physical-athletic development with the technical development.
Andrea Bargnani (m. 2,11, kg. 108/6'11", 240 pounds) is a power forward with great skills and an outstanding physical structure. It has been satisfying for all those, who have worked with him, to see him develop into the best young player in Italy, and, perhaps, in all of Europe. Nicknamed "Mago" (Italian for "magician"), Bargnani has the innate skills to magically create something from nothing and come up with effective solutions on the court with the maximum of simplicity. A lot of these seemingly "magical" skills came from the hours of hard work that he put in on the practice court with his coaches.

DRILLS

Control of the body and ball while running: Dynamic situation (fastbreak)

DRILL 1
The player, 4, starts with a sprint right from the mid-court line, gets the ball from the coach and, while running at maximum speed (without travelling), does the following:
1. With the receiving hand, he dribbles two times and, driving straight to the basket, dunks. Everything is performed at maximum speed (diagr. 1).
2. With the opposite hand, takes two dribbles, and dunks.

Variations
Finishing with power move or jump shot.

Progression
Introduce a change of dribbling hand at maximum speed (diagr. 2).
Another coach is on the court facing the player, on the other side of the court. If he raises both hands with fingers spread, this is a signal for the player that, just as the player receives the ball from one coach, he must pass the ball to other coach, receives it back, and then immediately shoots (diagr. 3). Pay attention to maintain balance, the height and control of the ball, with the eyes looking forward in all drills.
Note: We increase the quickness of the execution only when the player can master handling the ball with maximum efficiency. The drill is run on the right, center, and left lanes of the half court.

DRILL 2
The player starts with a sprint from the mid-court line, receives the ball, and stops at the three-point line. He will:
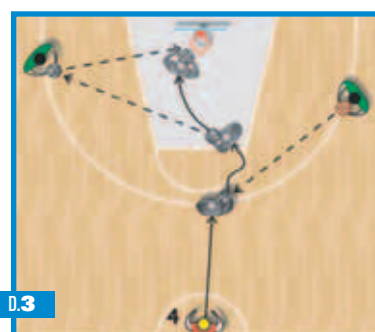1. Shoot (diagr. 4).
2. Make a crossover dribble, drive to the basket and shoot (diagr. 5).
3. Make a crossover dribble with a change of dribbling hand in a situation of "traffic", it means to add a passive obstacle, such as a chair or a coach, and then an active obstacle, a defender.
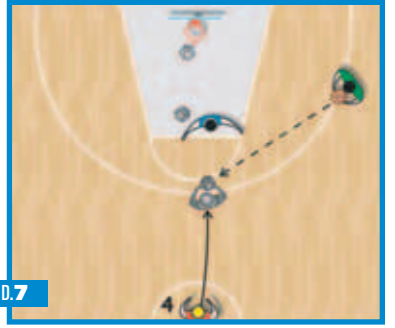

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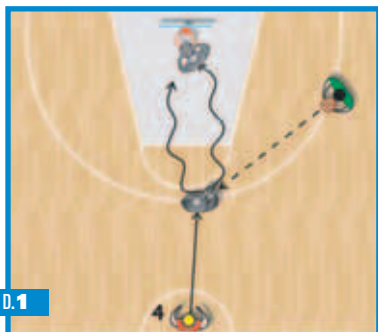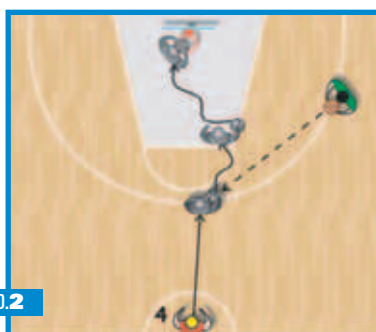
Variations

From crossover, a frontal change of the dribbling hand, to a reverse change of the dribbling hand, to a behind-the-back change of the dribbling hand (diagr. 6).
Bargnani's typical move: Crossover, a long step and a hop after the first dribble, and then an immediate lay up, alternatively with both hands. Drill to be repeated on the three lanes of the court: right, center, and left.

Progression

Add an obstacle inside the three-point line (an assistant acting as a passive defender, and, later on, a player acting as an active defender), so when the offensive player gets the ball, he must react to the move of the defender and take the right decision:
▼ Obstacle distant: shoot (diagr. 7).
▼ Obstacle closing out to the right side: drive to the left and make a lay up, and vice versa (diagr. 8).
▼ Obstacle anticipated: back-door cut, receive, and lay up (diagr. 9).
When, instead of an assistant, we put an active defender in the drill, the situation becomes "live" and the players play one-on-one until a basket is scored or the defender gets the ball on the rebound or a steal.
Bargnani's typical move: Crossover dribble with two strong dribbles to the left, left-right stop and fake, and shoot. Or he will fake and crossover step or half step with the right foot to the basket (diagr. 10).

Pay attention to make the stop with the balanced body. Moreover, always keep the ball protected: if a player brings the ball from one to the other side of the body, move it with a "spoon" move, either above the shoulder or under the knees, but never at the chest or the waist height (diagr. 11). The first step has to be deep and strong. The dribble is lateral, with the driving shoulder that "goes into" the opponent. The feet are aimed straight to the basket, not to the sideline.

DRILL 3

The player starts with a fast dribble from the mid-court line and moves towards an obstacle. He slows down a little bit to choose the proper solution, and goes up for a shot, for example a jump shot, if the defender steps back. Alternatively, he can change the dribbling hand, cutting in the middle of the three-second lane and then go for a shot. Otherwise, he can fake the change of the dribbling hand and, returning to the same side, finish on the baseline (diagr. 12).

Variations

Make a "V" cut without the ball, moving near or away from the ball (diagr. 13).

Progression

Add a chair (passive obstacle), the coach (predetermined obstacle), a defender (active obstacle), who starts to defend from the baseline (diagr. 14).

SERIES OF DRILLS

Post-up play and reaction to the defensive moves in a static situation.
Receive the ball in the low-post: wide-open legs, "sit", with the ball protected and held tightly with both hands.

BASIC ONE-ON-ONE MOVES

With the defender behind, in contact: look at the opposite corner of the free-throw line to see the play development on the weak side.
First dribble (slow) and drop-step to the inside to make the defender react.
The second dribble is strong, to beat the defender, and then finish with a baby-hook. Hard dribbles gives rhythm to the action (diagr. 15)
If the defender reacts and remains in the low defensive position, make a spin move to the baseline and finish at the basket with the outside hand. The player stretches, extending the arm high, and shooting above the defender (diagr. 16).

Variations

After the first dribble, make a shot fake, and crossover (up and under). The ball is moving from chest height so it is not an easy target for the defender (diagr. 17).
Bargnani's typical move: On the second dribble, stop, and take a step-back jump shot, moving away from inside the lane.

PROGRESSION ONE-ON-ZERO, TEACHING PHASE

The coach acts as a defender and pushes the player (we use an American football cushion and push it against the offensive player), jumping strongly in a direction to force the player to make the best decision. Otherwise, we can use a broom to force the player to stretch out and shoot over the defender in an almost straight line that goes from the tiptoes to the wrist of the shooting hand.
An assistant coach is standing outside the three-point line on the weak side. If he has his hands up while the player is dribbling, the player must make an immediate skip-pass (passing to a spot-up shooter) and maintains his position in the three-second lane to receive a pass back.
▼ With the defender, who anticipates on one side: The player receives the ball and immediately drop-steps, placing his foot over the defender's foot (diagr. 18) and goes straight to the basket. If the defender closes out quickly, he will spin on the opposite side.
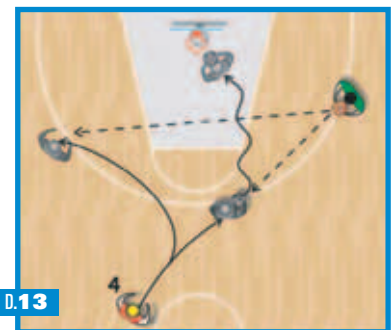▼ With the defender not making contact:
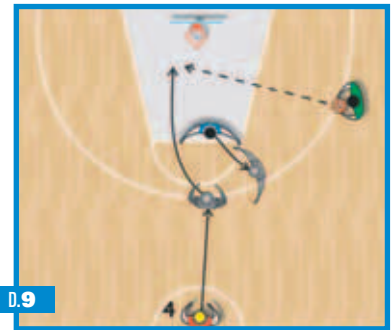
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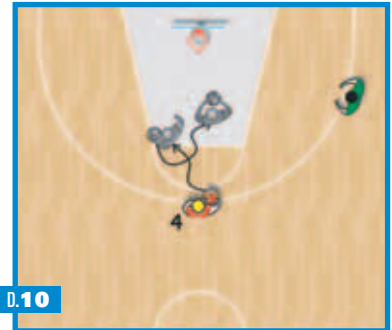
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Face the basket, using the outside foot as a pivot foot, and make a back reverse. In this phase, the ball must never be a target for the defender. Keep it "outside of the cylinder" where it is protected with the shoulder and the elbow of the backing hand, acting as a shield against the defender (diagr. 19).

Bargnani's typical move: On the left side, face the basket with the right foot as a pivot foot. Crossover to the basket, right-left stop, and shot fake. Front reverse and shoot, or crossover, or half step with the left foot to earn space toward the basket.
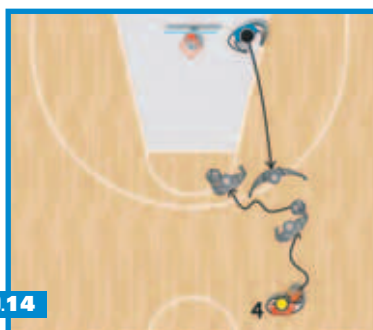
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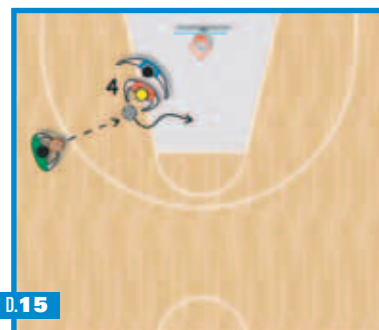
SUPERMAN DRILLS FOR POST PLAYERS

by Raphael Chillious

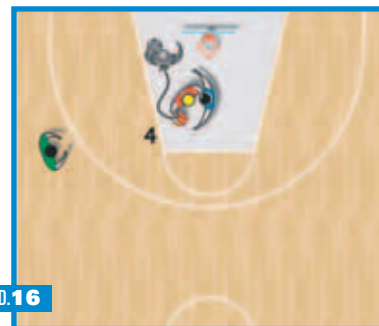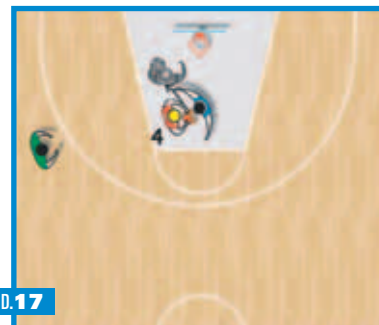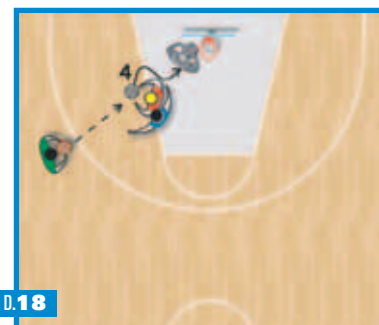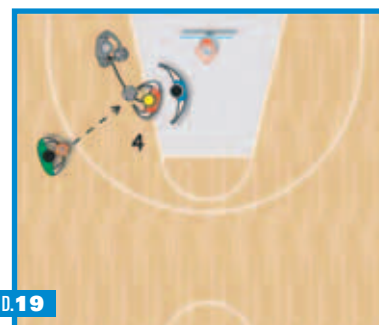**Raphael Chillious is head coach and co-director of South Kent School's Sports Department. He gave a major contribution in making this high school as one of the most famous American basketball schools, sending straight to the NBA two players in the last two years, Dorell Wright and Andray Blatche. Before, he had coached West Nottingham Academy. He also works as instructor at the NIKE Skills Academy, with the best 100 USA high school players.**

INTRODUCTION

The "Superman" Drills for Post Player's series is designed to give post players (4's & 5's) a skills' development workout. The goal is to increase conditioning and stamina, maximize footwork efficiency, and establish three essential jump shot areas that are critical to the offensive game of this position. It is important to note that the most dangerous post player is the one that can score with his/her back to the basket as well as being able to face the basket and consistently knock down (m. 2-5) 8-15 foot jump shots.

PHILOSOPHY

I firmly believe it is absolutely necessary for today's post players to be multi-dimensional offensive threats. The game of basketball has evolved to the point in which the "traditional" post player that plays solely with his/her back to the basket is at the mercy of well-coached defensive teams.

This "traditional" post player will score his/her share of baskets in quick-hit one-on-one post situations, but this scenario happens relatively few times during this course of a game.

This is due to the fact that coaches have done a great job of teaching their teams multiple double team schemes in an attempt to nullify the effectiveness of back-to-the-basket post players.

These double teams, along with the fact that post defenders are getting much better at preventing offensive post players from establishing good low-block position create problems to the offensive post players.

It is also my belief that offensive post players will have a tremendous advantage if they develop the necessary footwork (prior to receiving the ball) to receive post entry passes where they are most comfortable making moves,
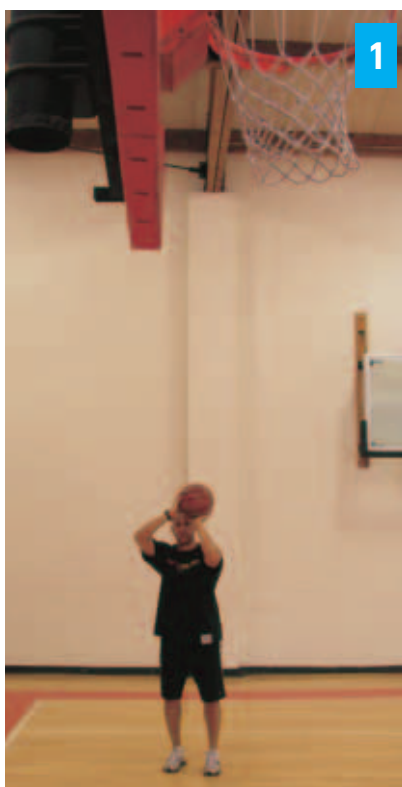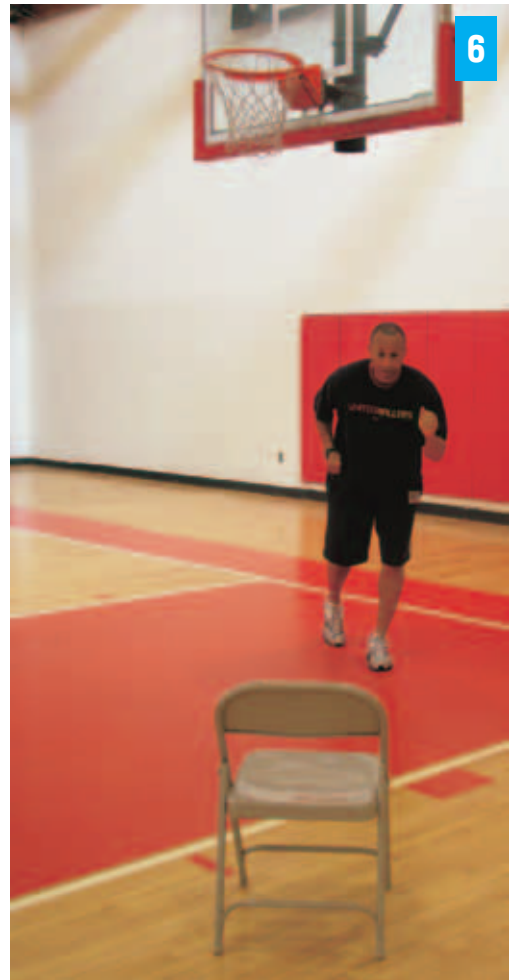
as well as pin-pointing spots on the court where they are capable of being consistent shooters.

The "Superman" post series will enable post players to establish solid position on the court, because they should be able to win the "foot" game for initial post-position.

Winning the pre-post entry pass "foot" game is a vital part of a post player's offensive development that is often overlooked in the basketball coaching profession.

We tend to concentrate on moves, moves, moves, but those moves mean nothing if the post player is unable to establish proper post-position. The equation is simple: win the "foot" game and you will be in position to make good solid post moves!

The three most important jump shot areas for low-post player are:
▼ The short corner, about 8-12 feet along the baseline (picture 1).
▼ The left or right free-throw elbow (picture 2).
▼ The foul line (picture 3).

This is due to the fact that these are areas on the court in which post players often find themselves handling the ball in most offenses. Plus, if the defender closes-out too hard on the offensive player, he/she can take one hard dribble and be at the basket for a lay-up or dunk.

The short corner (which is about m. 2-4, 8-12 foot) shot is especially effective because it is an unusual offensive attack position (especially against zone defenses), as it is an area in which the offensive player can take a good short shot (i.e. Udonis Haslem, Miami Heat's power forward), make a quick drive before a double team can come, and coaches rarely establish double team rules from this position on the floor.

Please note that if these spots don't work for your offense, choose some other spots on the court where your post players most often catch the ball when they haven't established low-post position.

NEEDED
A folding chair situated at the pro-post on either the right or left side of the basket (picture 4).

THE "SUPERMAN" SERIES
The drill begins with the coach on the

wing (at right or left of free throw line extension) with the ball (picture 5).

The player will start standing on the baseline under the basket, ready to flash to the ball side pro-post (picture 6). The drill begins when the coach smacks the ball with one hand and the post player sprints towards the ball-side chair and shuffles around the top if the chair with quick feet (picture 7). The player circles back around the front of the chair where they will then receive a post-feed from the coach (the player's bottom should touch the top of the chair to ensure he is in a low and strong balanced position). The player then either drop steps to the middle (picture 8) for a dunk or jump hook with his/her left-hand (picture 9). The player gets his/her rebound and passes the ball back to the coach. The player immediately sprints and does the quick feet/shuffle action around the chair, then sprints to the short corner (m. 2-5, 8-15 feet) and receives a pass for a jump shot (picture 10, 11, and 12). The player hustles after his/her rebound, passes the ball to the coach, and immediately does the quick feet action back around the chair and sprints to the ball side elbow and receives a pass from the coach for a jump shot (picture 13). The player retrieves his/her rebound, passes the ball back to the coach, quick feet around the chair, and sprints to the free-throw line to receive a pass for another jump shot (picture 14 and 15).

After passing the ball back to the coach the player finishes the series by doing the quick feet action around the chair to the short corner, free-throw line extended, and free-throw line where he/she will ball-fake, take one dribble, and drive to the basket for a lay-up or dunk. The complete series should be repeated 20-30 times on both sides of the floor (right hand dunks or jump hooks to the middle on the opposite side of the court).

Again, the purpose of the Superman Series for post player's is to increase stamina and conditioning, maximize footwork efficiency, and establish three critical jump shot areas for elite level post-players. Emphasis must be placed on the quick feet/shuffle because it teaches post players to be nimble, while trying to gain post position, as well as keeping them focused on the fact that they are going to gain optimal position in the paint with their feet and not just by using brute force.

GAME PLAN FOR THE 2006 EUROLEAGUE FINAL

by Ettore Messina

by Emanuele Molin

Ettore Messina began his career as a head coach in 1989 with Virtus Bologna, the team he led in four years to one Italian Championship, one European Cup and one Italian Cup. From 1993 to 1997 he coached the Italian National Team, winning the silver medal at the 1997 European Championship and the gold medal at the Mediterranean Games in 1993. In 1997 he went back to Virtus Bologna, staying five more seasons and winning two more Italian Championships, two Euroleague editions (besides two more finals played), and three Italian Cups. From 2002 to 2005 he coached Benetton Treviso, winning one Italian Championship, three Italian Cups, and taking part in one Euroleague Final. Since 2005 he has coached CSKA Moscow, winning the Euroleague in his first year, in addition to the Russian Championship, and the Russian Cup. He was named 2005-06 Euroleague Coach of the Year.

Emanuele Molin coached the youth teams of Mestre, Treviso, and Virtus Bologna. In 2000 he became the assistant coach of Virtus Bologna, working with Ettore Messina. He stayed in Virtus for two seasons (winning an Italian Championship, one Euroleague, and two Italian Cups), before going back to Benetton Treviso, working as assistant coach (in three years he won one Italian Championship and three Italian Cups). He went to CSKA Moscow in 2005, and his team won the Euroleague, the Russian Championship, and Russian Cup.

The first difficulty as we approached the 2006 Euroleague final was to prepare a game plan in less than 48 hours that could be used against Maccabi Tel Aviv (Israel), a strong opponent that we had never played against.
We were not the favorites to win the game, but we did not want to be the runner-up in this game. We knew our skills, but even better, we knew our limits and, above all, we came to coach CSKA Moscow and win this championship game. Essential to our success was the contribution given us by our other assistant coach, Evgeni Pashutin, who, in the previous two Final Four editions, in Tel Aviv and Moscow, had the chance to study coach Pini Gershon's Maccabi team.
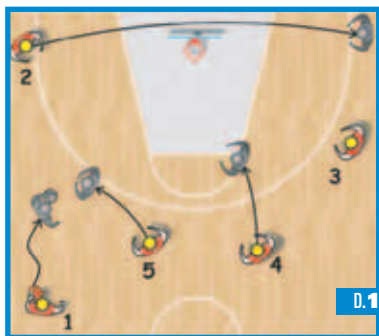
DEFENSE
The match-ups:
- ▼ Will Solomon-JR Holden
- ▼ Tal Burstein-Trajan Langdon
- ▼ Anthony Parker-David Vanterpool
- ▼ Nikola Vujcic-Matjaz Smodis
- ▼ Maceo Baston-Alexei Savrasenko

For the defensive match-ups, we considered Vujcic, their center, as the heart of Maccabi's offensive system. Therefore Smodis (and/or Panov, his substitute) should anticipate and attack him when he moved away from the basket. Vanterpool, the guard, in our intentions, should accept the individual challenge against Parker, and would be helped by Papaloukas. For Baston's athletism and explosiveness we had no countermeasure, if not partially, by using Van den Spiegel's dynamic skills, and for this reason we simply thought to give to Savrasenko an inside position to protect the basket, but, above all, to protect spaces in one-on-one situations and on cuts from the weak side. This, accepting that Baston could be dangerous far from the basket. The main idea was to limit their ball circulation and slow down their fluid game so they could not involve all of their players. This would help decrease the effectiveness of their less talented players. Offensive transition was Maccabi's most efficient and successful game phase. Lateral pick-and-roll (diagr. 1), played with a slow rhythm was the trigger of their offense: the aim was not to look for a basket in the first ten-seconds of possession, but, rather, to provoke the reaction of the defense. This allowed them to take a first advantage amplifying it with a quick ball circulation: Vujcic's position in high-post, his game-reading skills, and his passing skills were the keys of their system (diagr. 2).
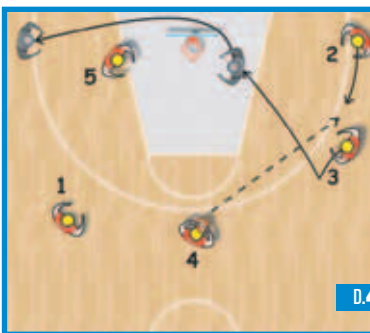
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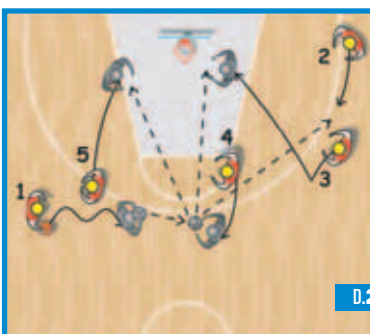
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DEFENSE AGAINST PICK-AND-ROLL

We decided not to react to their first pick-and-roll. Instead, we almost played a 'non-defense' in which the main aim was to take away space for their penetrations and, above all, not to set off defensive rotations. When 1 (Solomon) had attacked by using the pick-and-roll (diagr. 3), X5 would have to take a flat position toward the screen line, faking to help, taking care not to allow the penetration. X1 would force the screen, staying in front of the ball and pressing it as much as possible. At the same time, X4 would take an anticipating position in open guard towards the ball to discourage a quick pass to the high-post (denying offensive triangles with the big men), and collapsing to the free-throw zone to recover aggressively on the possible reception by 4.

Solomon and/or Parker would have found in front of him a defensive wall and a completely overcrowded space: the only remaining solution would have been the jump shot off the dribble, a play that did not involve his teammates.

DEFENSIVE RULES

On the pick-and-roll played after they changed the offensive side (diagr. 4 and 5), we kept our defensive rules:

1. If the pick-and-roll has been played at the beginning of the possession, with X4, help and fast recover with no rotation. We made a defensive switch any time the dribbler went to the basket and/or in the last seconds of the possession.
2. With X5, we protected the basket, directing the ball to the sideline. We switched automatically when the dribbler increased his speed and drove to the basket.

We defended in a similar way in the other pick-and-roll situations foreseen by their attacks against a set defense. For this reason, we tried to turn their offense, characterized by many passes, into a sum of isolated one-on-one situations. If the ball had come in low-post (diagr. 6), we would have disturbed Vujcic and Baston's one-on-ones with the passer's defender (diagr. 7). This way, the defenders on the weak side could concentrate on the action without the ball.

ZONE DEFENSE

Another important and pivotal choice was to use zone defense in all the sideline and baseline throw-ins, and after every free-throw. We felt - even though they were good passers and shooters - that their offense against zone defense didn't offer as many options and readings as against man-to-man defense. Indeed, their sideline and baseline throw-ins were very good. During the game, the feeling was confirmed and we used zone defense constantly in the final part of the second quarter. It was an important moment, because their difficulty playing against the zone forced them to think that the game was becoming tougher than what they believed, and that they could lose it.

OFFENSE

As important as the defensive choices were, we had many ideas on how to attack Maccabi's defense. Maccabi Tel Aviv is certainly more an offensive team than a defensive one, but experience and defensive strategies they used caused unusual problems. Match-up zone and the use of defensive switches in all the screen situations were the two most important aspects of their defense. We tried to give valid inputs for both situations to our players:

▼ First of all, select attacks that could be successful against match-up zone.
▼ Then, we underlined some offensive details we considered important to attack these kind of defense:

1. Outside players, by using screens, must widen the spaces and look for good spacing in order to punish possible mismatches.
2. In screen actions, big men must - after having screened - roll deeply towards the

basket, trying to offer a target for the passer right in the heart of the defesnse. At the same time, their presence in the paint against a smaller opponent would have been a physical advantage on offensive rebounds.

3. We decided to attack the defensive switches, taking advantage of mismatches: the guard against the center and not vice versa. First of all, the dribbler, reading the switch, must not stop the ball circulation, but has to pass it to make the defense move (diagr. 8). Faking to look for the mismatch advantage between the big man and the guard, close to the basket, we chose to give the ball back to the guard guarded by the big man. We could have had a dynamic one-on-one situation in the middle of the court, where the defense could not create a strong side (diagr. 9).

4. We wanted to attack Solomon and Sharp with Vanterpool and Papaloukas in low-post.

5. We decided to control the game rhythm when, after a basket scored by Maccabi, the arena broke out with the applause of 9,000 Israeli supporters. On this subject, Smodis told us of his past experience at the 2004 Final Four, at the Nokia Arena in Tel Aviv.

In moments like these, it was better for us to play offense for as long as possible, forcing them to play defense for the entire 24-second limit.
This way, we wouldn't allow them to increase their physical intensity and the game rhythm, using this momentum to gain an advantage over us.
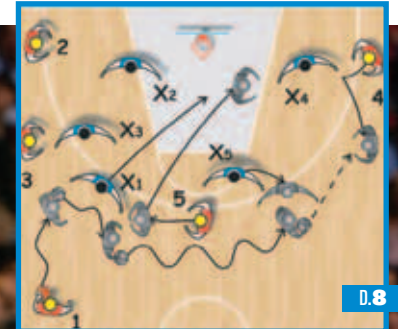
Thanks to the performance and team play of our athletes, all these strategies worked well and, and we left the arena in Prague with the Euroleague championship title, the main target of our season.
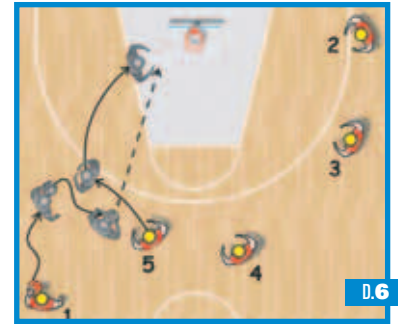
SPAIN'S WINNING OFFENSE

Jose Vicente "Pepu" Hernandez started his coaching career in 1989 as assistant coach of Estudiantes Madrid. In 1994 he became head coach and led the team to eight semifinals, one final of the championship and a King's Cup win (in 2000). In 2005 Hernadez became head coach of the Spanish men's national team and this year he won the Gold medal at the FIBA World Championship in Japan.

The first priority on offense was to use our very quick guards to dribble the ball up the floor at high speed. The guards would look to pass to the forwards sprinting ahead of the ball from all broken plays or interceptions or deflections from our 2-2-1 zone press or 3-2 zone. The point guard (or the other guard) would alternate in handling the ball with the other guard and the small forward sprinting on the sideline lanes. On the offensive transition, after a basket scored by the opponents, the ball would go:

▼ To the other guard or the small forward running in the sideline lanes.

▼ To the power forward for a catch close to the basket.

▼ To the center, usually the trailer, after an on-ball screen (pick-and-roll).

On the half court, a series of plays were run from the main offensive alignment of three players on the perimeter and two inside the three-second lane, either high ("horn"), low, or staggered (high-low).

Another priority was the dribble penetration for our very quick and great ball-handler guards, who could also shoot very well from the perimeter.

An important aspect was that many half-court plays "flowed" and began from a full-court transition.

THE PERSONNEL
THE GUARDS

The guards were very quick and they also handled the ball very well, attacking the defenders with the crossover dribble and the crossover dribble fake. They were able to penetrate very effectively and were very dangerous from the perimeter as well. Thanks to their outstanding ball-handling ability, they were able to create their own shots off the dribble.
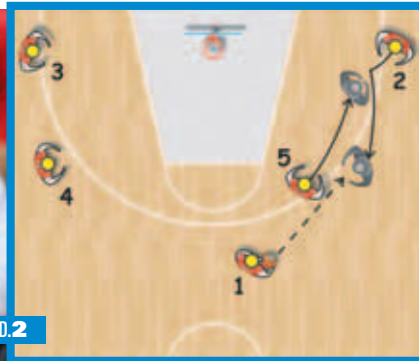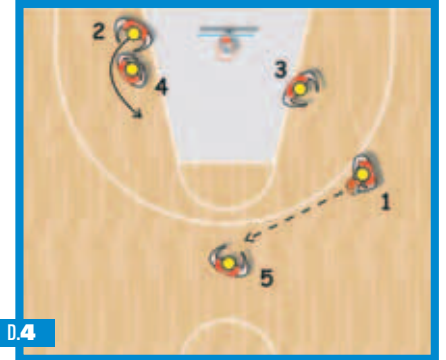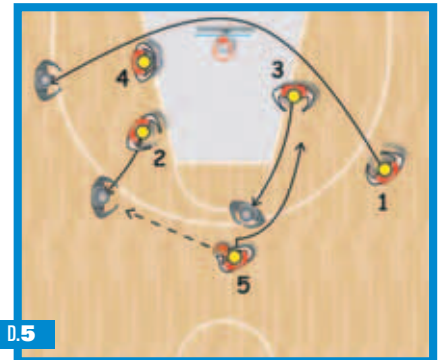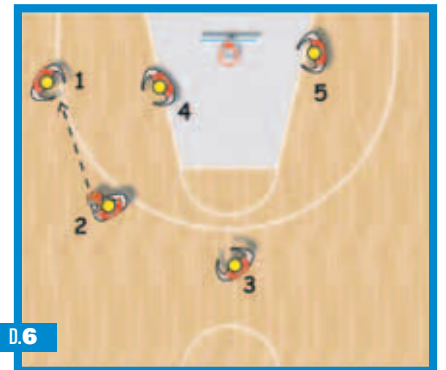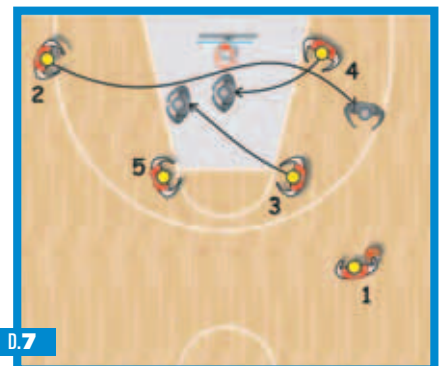
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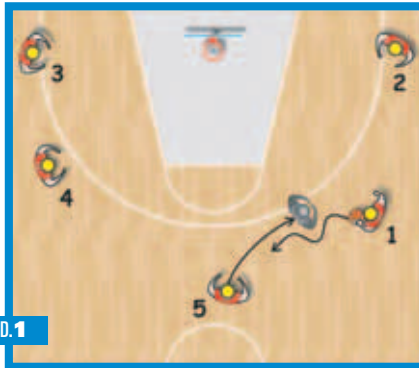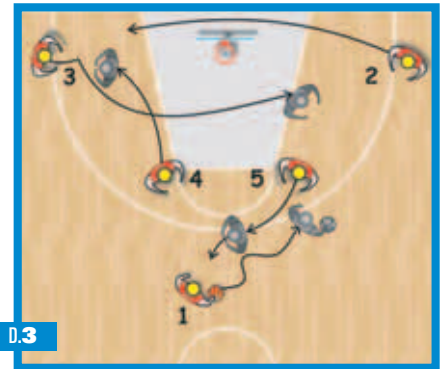
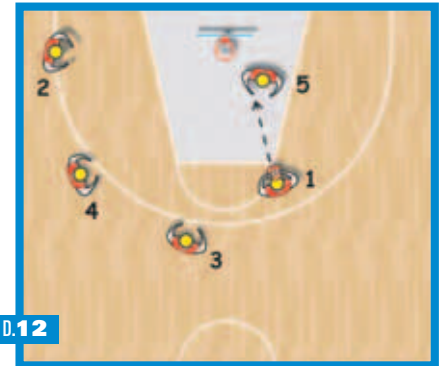### THE FORWARDS

They could both play inside as well as outside the three-second line. All of them had good shooting ranges, also from the three-point line, with the "catch-and-shoot" jump shot, as well as the pull-up jump shot off the dribble. A prime example of this was Jorge Garbajosa, the best three-point shooter of the final.

THE CENTERS

They were versatile players, with good inside moves and fine shooting touches outside the three-second line. Their main attacking moves were the "back in" dribble with a jump hook and a turn-around jump shot.

OFFENSIVE TRANSITION PLAYS

Here are the different options, based on the player involved.

OPTION FOR 2 (NAVARRO)

3 and 2 are in the corner after the primary break. 4 is on the left wing and 1 has the ball on the right side of the court, while 5 is the trailer. 5 runs a pick-and-roll for 1, who dribbles to the center of the court, and then 5 down screens for

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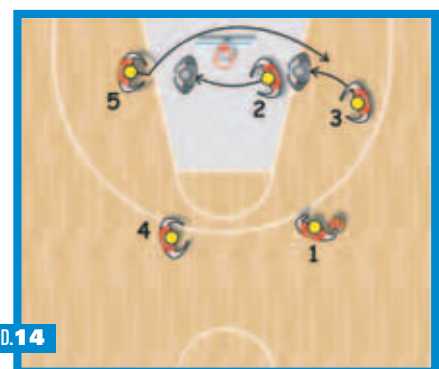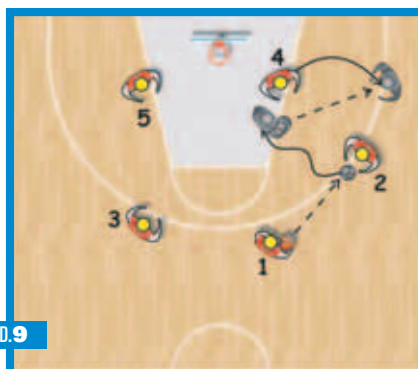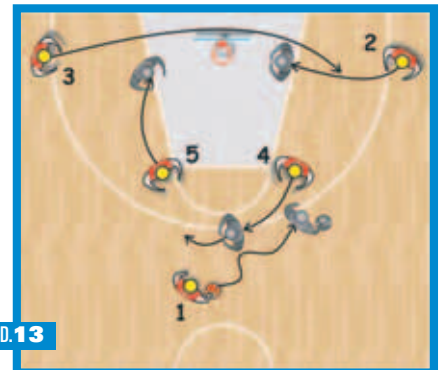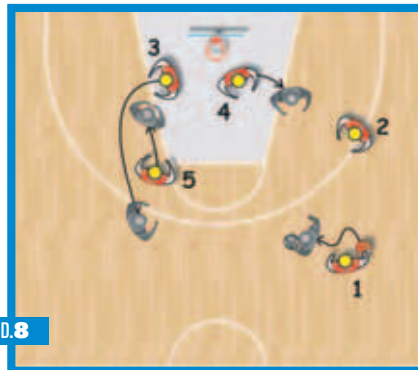
2, who curls around 5 and receives the ball from 1 for a jump shot (diagr. 1 and 2).

OPTION FOR 1 (CALDERON)

3 and 2 are in the corners after the primary break, and 4 and 5 are set at the corners of the free-throw area. 5 screens on the ball for 1, while, at the same time, 4 sets a down screen for 3, and 2 cuts across the baseline (diagr. 3). 3 goes to the low-post position, 4 makes another screen, now for 2, and 1 passes the ball to 5 (diagr. 4). 5 passes the ball to 2, and 1 cuts off the baseline screens, first from 3, then from 4, and comes to the wing area. 3, after the screen for 1, makes a blind screen for 5, and 5 goes to the low post (diagr. 5). 2 passes to 1 for a shot, or to 4 in the low post (diagr. 6).

OPTION FOR 4 (GARBAJOSA)

3 and 4 set a staggered screen for 2, who cuts off the two screens and comes high (diagr. 7). 5 makes a down screen for 3 (screen-the-screener), who cuts off the screen (diagr. 8). 1 passes to 2, who drives to the basket. On this move, 4 flares out to the corner to receive the ball from 2 and shoot (diagr. 9).

OPTION FOR 5 (GASOL)

5 sets an on-ball screen for 1, and immediately after screens for 3. 3 then sets a screen (screen-the-screener) on 5's defender (diagr. 10).
1 dribbles off the 5's screen, while 3 cuts high after setting the screen on 5's defender. 5 cuts to the basket (diagr. 11). 1 passes the ball to 5 under the basket (diagr. 12).
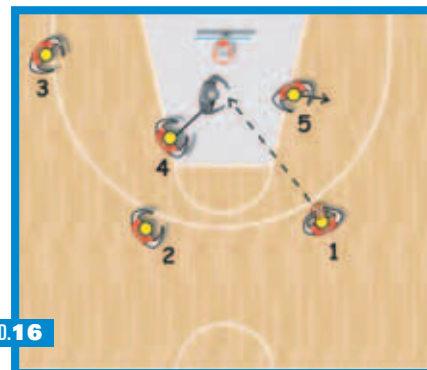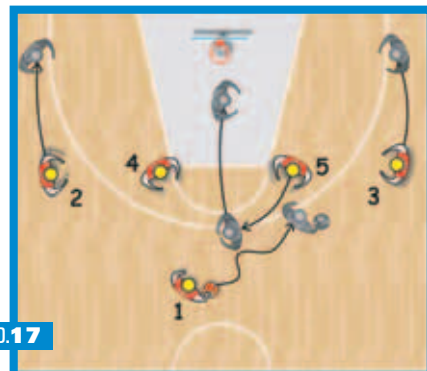
SET PLAYS

PLAY FOR 4 (GARBAJOSA)

3 and 2 are in the corners, 4 and 5 are set at
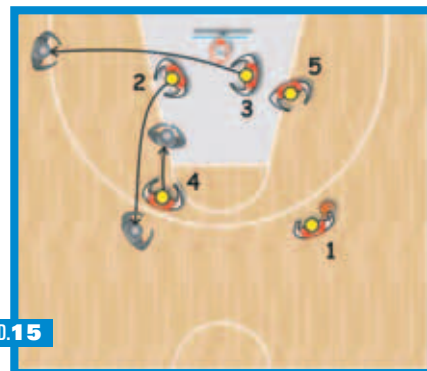
the corners of the free-throw area, while 1 is in the middle of the court. 2 sets a screen for 3, who cuts along the baseline, and gets off the opposite corner, while 4 sets an on ball screen for 1 (diagr. 13). 2 continues his cut and sets a baseline screen for 5, and then 5 receives another screen from 3 (diagr. 14). 3 flares out to the corner and 2 receives a down-screen from 4, and then comes up high (diagr. 15). 4 cuts to the basket after screening for 2 and receives the ball from 1 (diagr. 16).

"HORNS": ANOTHER PLAY FOR 4 (GARBAJOSA)

The initial set is a 1-4 formation. 5 sets a screen on the ball for 1, who dribbles off 5's screen , while 2 and 3 flare to the corners (diagr. 17).

After setting the on ball screen for 1, 5 rolls to the basket, and 4 runs out from the high post position and gets the ball from 1. From this spot, he can shoot, drive to the basket, or pass to 5, 3, 2, or 1 (diagr. 18).

PLAY FOR 5 (GASOL)

4 and 5 set a staggered double screen for 3, who cuts off and sets an on-ball screen for 1, who was dribbling to the opposite side of the staggered double screen. 2 cuts across the baseline and sets himself below 4 and 5 (diagr. 19).

1 dribbles off 3's on-ball screen. Immediately after the screen, 3 rolls to the corner (diagr. 20).

2 cuts off 4 and 5 and goes to the top of court, while 4 goes to the corner and 5 posts up on the low-post position (diagr. 21). 1 makes a skip pass from one side of the court to the opposite corner to 4 (diagr. 22). 4 passes to 5 and cuts to the opposite corner to clear out this area of the half court and let 5 play one-on-one. 3 cuts and curls back, positioning himself on the opposite block to 5, who can play one-on-one or pass to the teammates on the perimeter, 1, 2 or 4, or inside to 3 (diagr. 23).

VARIATION OF THE PLAY FOR 5 (GASOL)

The beginning is the same: 4 and 5 set a staggered double screen for 3, who cuts off and sets an on-ball screen for 1, who was dribbling to the opposite side of the staggered double screen. 2 cuts across the baseline and sets himself below 4 and 5 (diagr. 24). 1 dribbles off the 3's on-ball screen. Immediately after the screen, 3 rolls to the corner (diagr. 25). 2 cuts off 4 and 5. 1 passes to 2 (diagr. 26). 2 drives to the middle of the three-second lane, while 4 goes to the corner and 5 cuts to the basket to receive a pass from 2. If 2 cannot pass to 5, he can kick out the ball to 4 in the corner (diagr. 27).
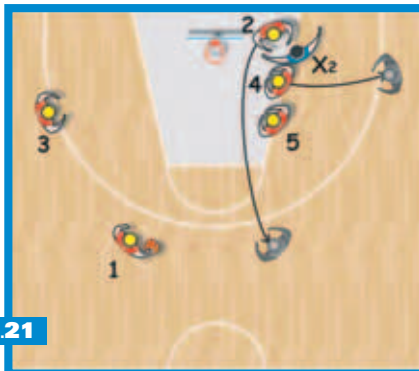
ANOTHER PLAY FOR 5 (GASOL)

2 cuts around 5 and 4, and then goes in the middle of the half court, while 5 flares to the corner, and 4 goes to the low-post area on the same side of the court (diagr. 28). 1 passes to 2, 5 sets an on-ball screen for 2. 2 dribbles off 5's on-ball screen, and then 5 rolls to the basket to receive the ball from 2 (diagr. 29).
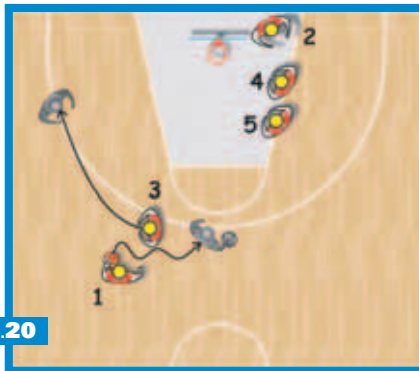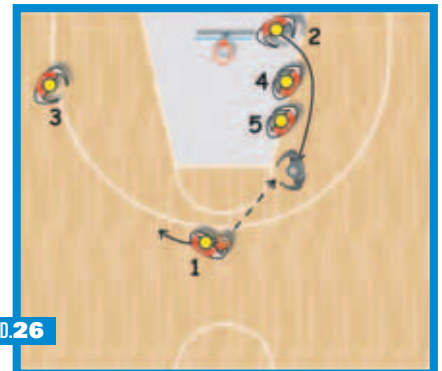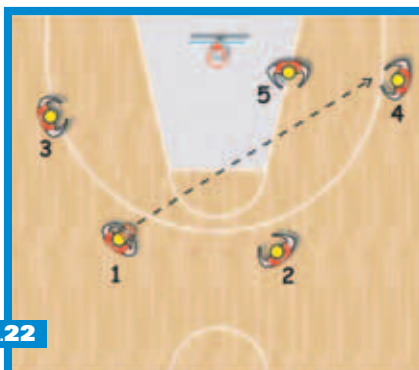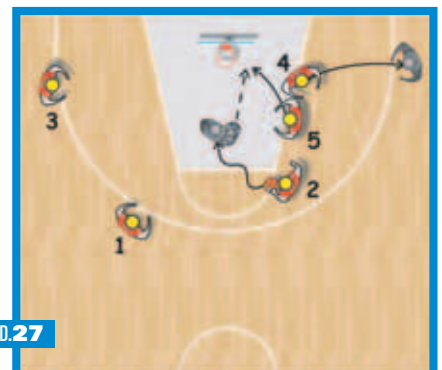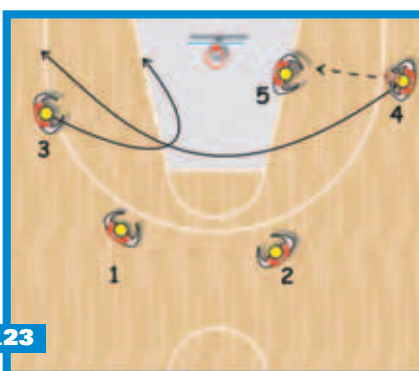
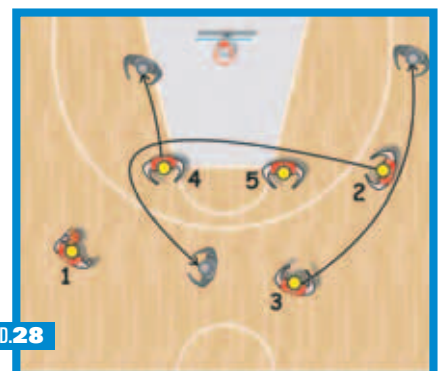D.20
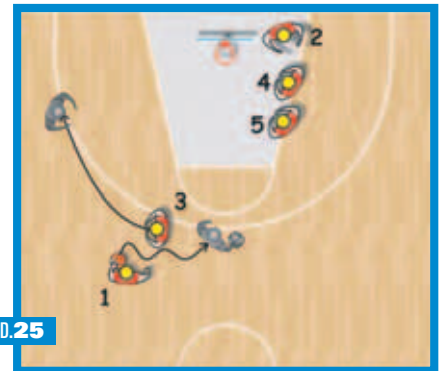
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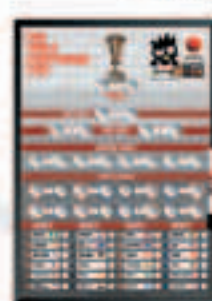**ALL FIBA KEY RINGS** 35€ REF: F20

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THE ZONE PRESS DEFENSE

by Lucien
Van Kersschaever

Lucien Van Kersschaever has been the Director of the Basketball Academy in Antwerpen (Belgium) since 2005. He has been the Technical Director of Belgian Men's and Under 20 National teams. He started his coaching career as head coach of Sunair Ostende, and has coached Racing Mechelen, winning seven Belgian Division I titles and five Cups of Belgium. He has also served as head coach of Dutch Men's National team.

THREE-QUARTER ZONE PRESS

We set in a 2-2-1 formation (diagr. 1), and we run this defense after a made or missed free-throw. The aim is to change the pace of the game, forcing opponents to make mistakes, and allowing us to steal the ball.
I tell my players not to gamble too much, and also this is very important, to keep their assigned positions.

SPECIFIC RULES

First Line of Defense
▼ Both guards must maintain proper spacing, staying about 3 meters (10 feet) away from each other.
▼ They do not allow a pass to be made in the middle of the court.
▼ They must force players to make a pass below the extension of the free-throw line.
▼ Once the pass is made, they must force the player with the ball to dribble.
▼ They must force the ball handler to dribble along the sideline.
▼ As long as the ball is in front of a defender, he must stay with the offensive player.
▼ Once the ball has crossed the half-court line, the defender must push the ball towards the corner.
▼ If the ball is passed over the heads of the defenders, they must sprint back toward the basket.

Second Line of Defense
▼ Defenders must stay one step below the mid-court line.
▼ The defender away from the ball must stop any opponent, who cuts in the middle of the court.
▼ Defenders must trap when the dribbler crosses the half court.
▼ The defender opposite to the trap must slide back to cover the high post.
▼ Defenders must rotate to open spots on the baseline.
▼ When the ball goes over their heads, they must sprint back to open spot at the baseline.

### Third Line of Defense
▼ This player must always talk to the other defenders, because he sees all the court.
▼ He must take position on the ball side.
▼ He must stay as low as the deepest offensive player.
▼ He must close out if the ball is in the corner.
▼ He must go for the steal on the long pass.
▼ He must prevent any baseline drive.

GENERAL RULES
▼ All defenders must communicate with each other.
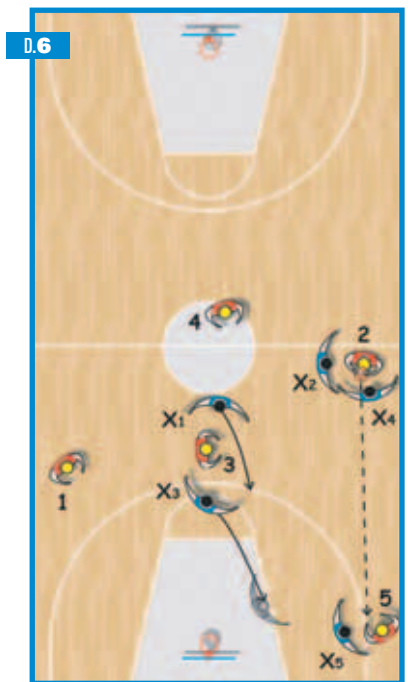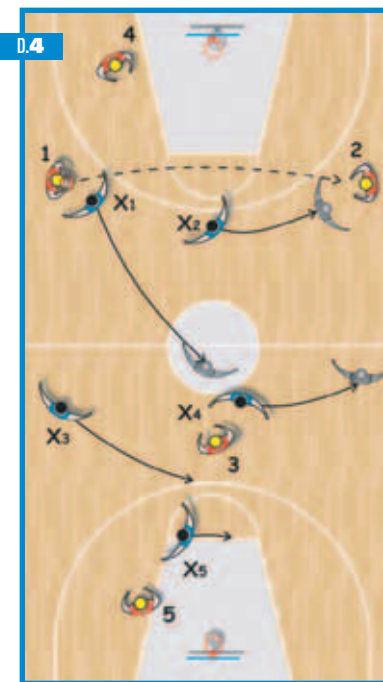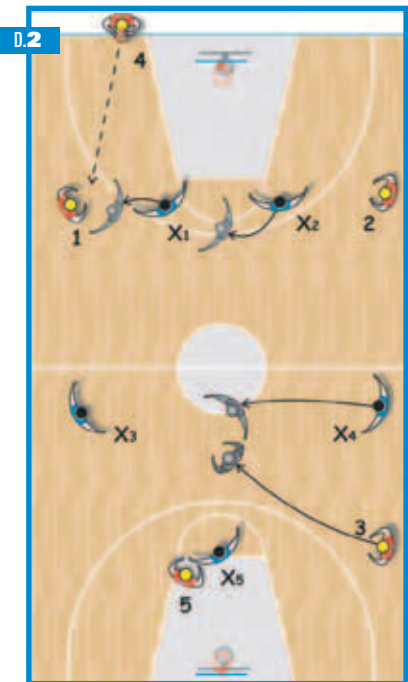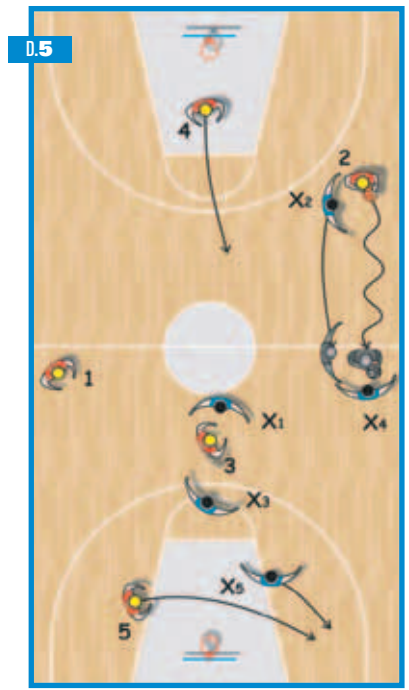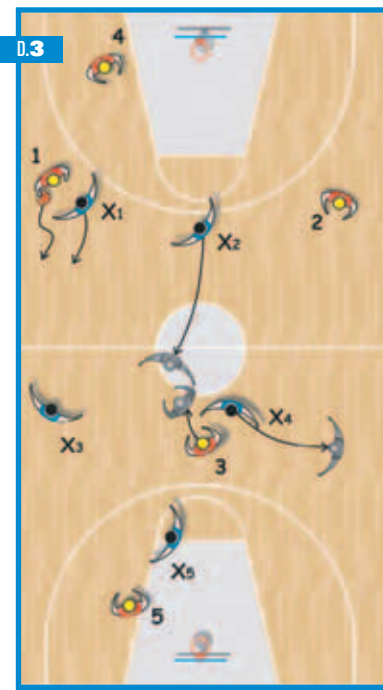
▼ Let the first pass be made, but not in the middle of the court.
▼ Force the first receiver to dribble along the sideline.
▼ Do not let any opponent make a flash cut in the middle of the court.
▼ Leave the position only when the ball is passed over your head.
▼ Whenever this happens, sprint back.
▼ Move when the ball is in the air, not after an opponent has received the ball.
▼ On a long pass to the corner, go out and aggressively cover the ball handler.

DEFENSIVE ADJUSTMENTS
Ball Inbounded on One Side of the Court
▼ X1 forces 1 to dribble, as soon as this player received the ball.
▼ X2 protects the middle of the court, and he will take over as soon as an offensive man crosses in the middle of the court.
▼ X3 must avoid any flash cut of 3 in the middle.
▼ X4 protects the middle of the court.

▼ X5 moves in one or the other direction based on the movements of the ball (diagr. 2).

Flash Cut in the Middle from the Backcourt
X4 denies the flash cut of 3, until X2 covers him. Then, X3 goes back on his position. X2 will deny any pass in the middle to 3 (diagr. 3).

Skip Pass
On a skip pass, from one to the other side of the court, X1 and X2 must move together, while the ball is in the air.
X4 moves up for trapping, X3 protects the middle of the court, near the three-point line, X5 takes position in the 3-second lane, and X1 runs in the middle of the court, near the jump ball circle (diagr. 4).
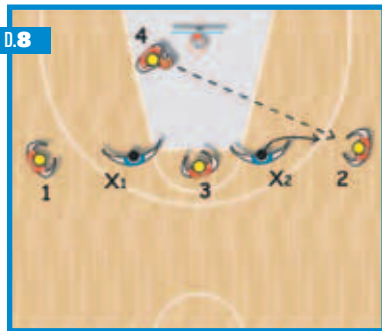
The Dribbler Crosses the Mid Court
X2 and X4 trap, and X3 protects the lane, setting himself at the free-throw line. X1 denies the pass to 3, ready also to cover a skip pass to 1,
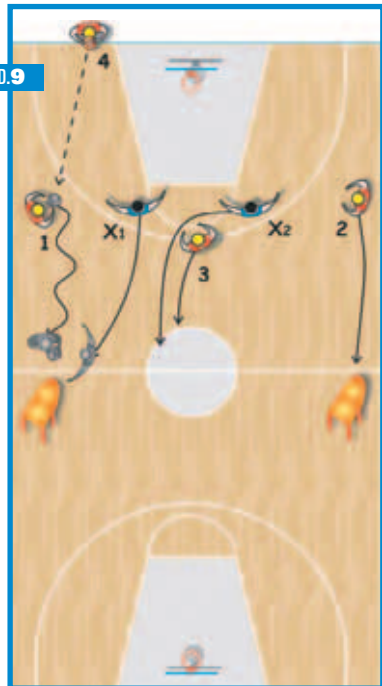
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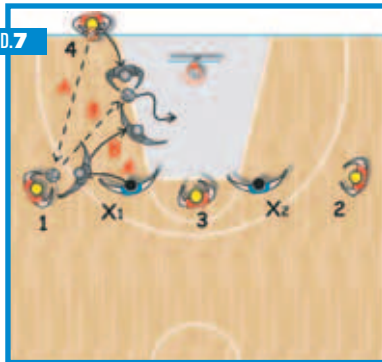
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while X5 is responsible for guarding 5 if he cuts to the ball side (diagr. 5).

Pass to the Corner Rotations

X5 must goes out aggressively on 5, X3 slides down on the ball side and toward the baseline, and covers all the cuts to the post area. In the meantime, X2 and X1 protect the elbow and free-throw line (diagr. 6).

DRILLS TO BUILD THIS DEFENSE

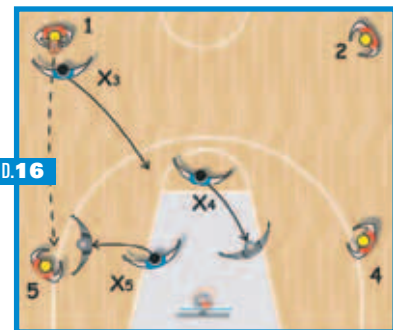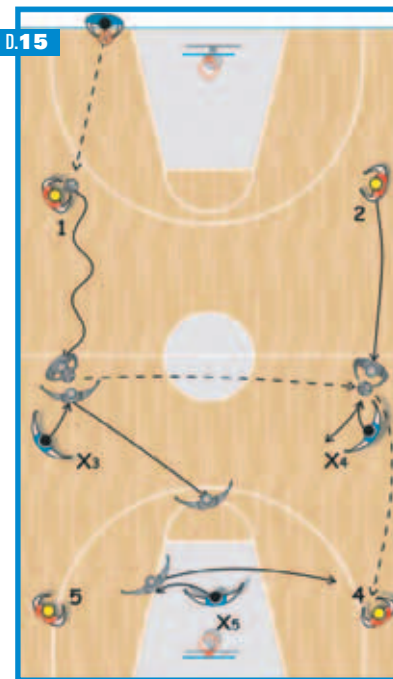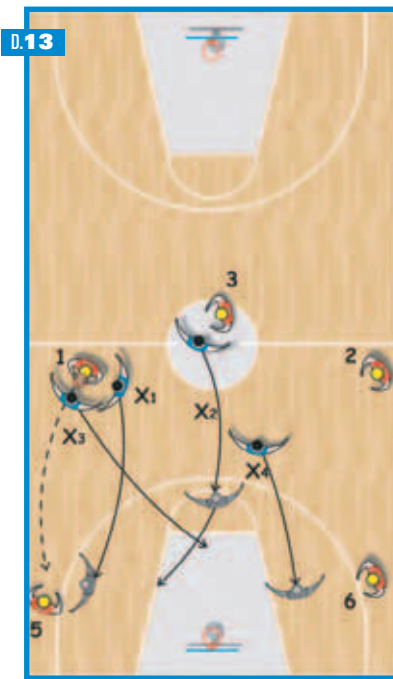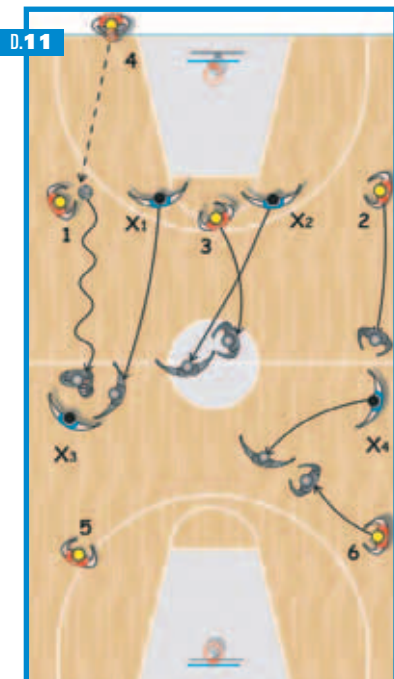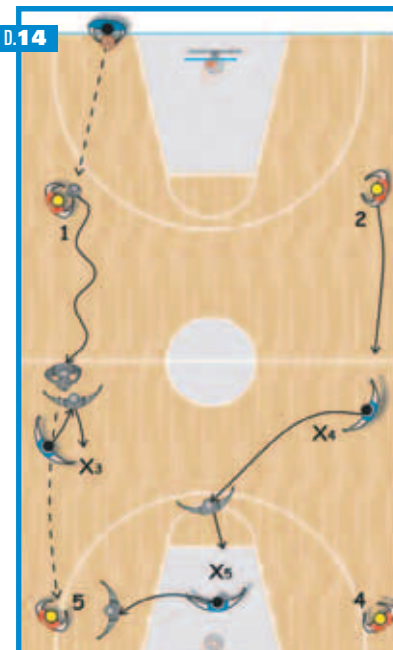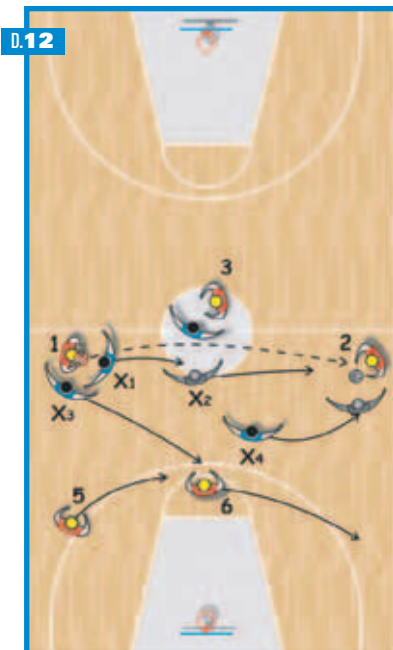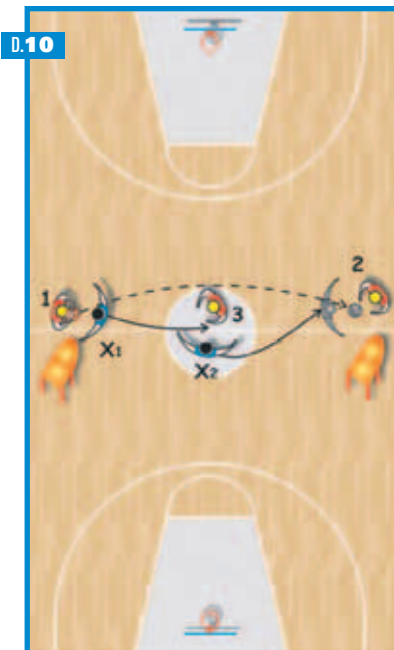### Frontline Responsibility Drill - First Part

This drill is run to teach the first line of defenders how to move when the ball is inbounded. Four offensive players play versus two defenders: the two defenders, X1 and X2, must let the inbounder make the inbound pass, but not in the middle of the court, and then force the receiver to dribble. The defender of the ball handler, X1, must stay with him as long as the ball is in front of him, and, when the ball is passed back to the

offensive player, who made the inbound pass, he must get back to his original position (diagr. 7).

The offensive players pass the ball, and, after a couple of skip passes, they try to hit the teammate in the middle of the court. The two defenders, X1 and X2, must try to touch or deflect the pass (diagr. 8).

Frontline Responsibility Drill - Second Part

Now X1 forces the receiver to dribble along the sideline, but without trying to steal the ball. X1 must bring the ball handler on the trap that is run at the mid-court, while the other defensive guard, X2, must be half a step below the line of the ball. As soon as the ball is passed, he must fly with the ball and protect the middle of the court. The drill is run until the mid-court line. To simulate the other defender who traps, a chair is set at both corners of the mid-court line and near the sideline (diagr. 9). Once the ballhandler has reached the mid-court and is trapped, he

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makes a skip pass to the teammate on the opposite side: X2 must fly with the ball and cover the receiver (diagr. 10).

Second Line Responsibility Drill - First Part
We now put on the court six offensive players versus four defenders. The second line defender on the ball side, X3, traps with X1. Both defenders have their hands up and "mirror" the ball, while X1 protects the middle from any flash cut (diagr. 11).

Second Line Responsibility Drill - Second Part
On the skip pass to the other side of the court, all the defenders must fly with the ball (diagr. 12).
On a pass to the corner, X3 must try to deflect the ball (diagr. 13).

Last Line Responsibility Drill
Four offensive players versus three defenders, plus a coach. The

D.17

D.18

D.19

D.20

D.21

D.22
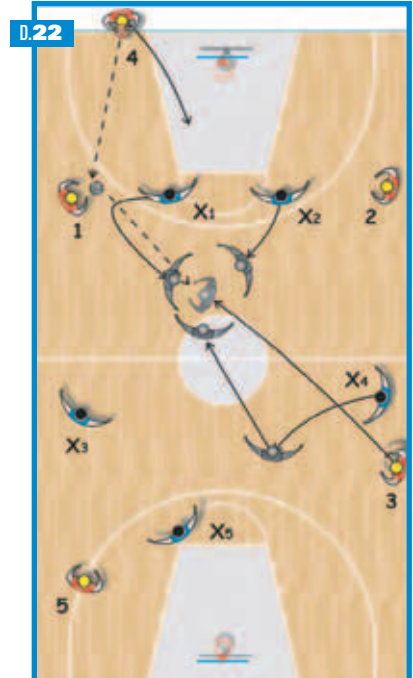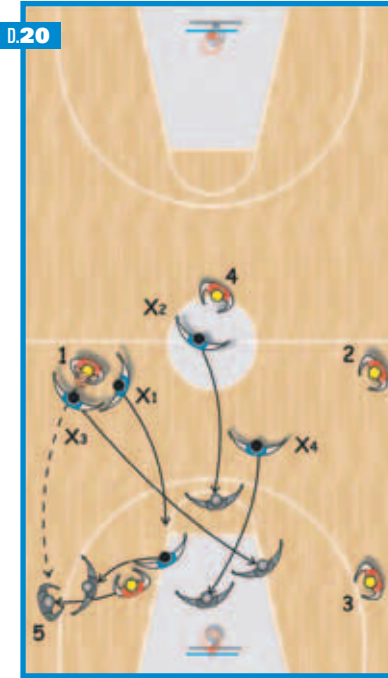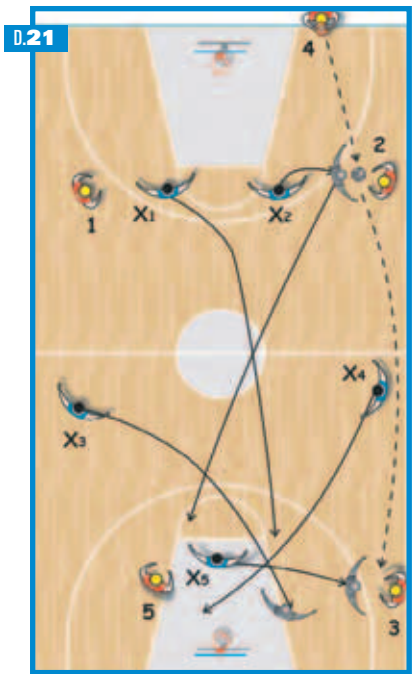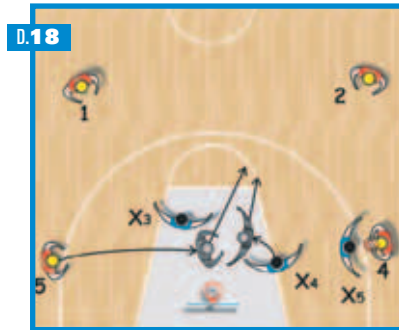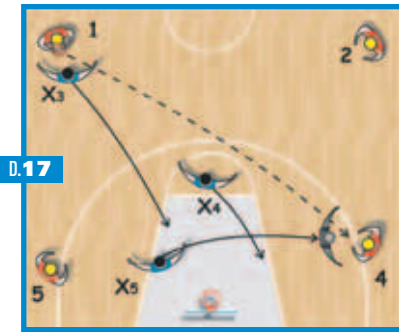
coach inbounds the ball to 1, and he immediately dribbles the ball over the mid-court line as the second line of defense creates the trap. The opposite defender, X4, protects the middle of the court, while the last line defender, X5, moves to the ball side, with a foot inside the three-second lane. When the ball is passed to the other side of the court with a skip pass, the two defenders of the second line must fly with the ball. X5 runs on the ball side, with one foot in the three-second lane (diagr. 14 and 15). **Note:** All five players must move simultaneously when the ball is in the air.

Rotation of the Second and the Last Line Drill
When the ball goes in the corner, the last line defender, X5, closes out, keeping a good and aggressive defensive position. X4 goes back and covers the middle of the three-second lane, X3 runs out of the trap and goes on the open spot opposite to the ball side. Then they play, following the zone defense rules (diagr. 16).
On a skip pass to the opposite corner (diagr. 17), all players rotate, while the ball is in the air: X5 closes out in the corner, X4 goes back and

covers the middle of the three-second lane, and X3 runs on the open spot opposite to the ball (diagr. 18).

Low Post Cut Drill
If the low post player opposite to the ball, cuts along the baseline, from block to block, the defender in the middle of the lane, X4, covers the flash cut and fronts him. However, if the low post player moves up to the high post position, X3 will cover his flash cut, and then he will exchange with X4. The same happens if a forward makes a flash cut to the ball: as usual, we do not let any ball to go in the middle (diagr. 18).

Five-on-Five Drill
Finally, we put together all the previous drills. We play five-on-five after we shoot a free-throw, and we run this defense on a made or missed free-throw (diagr. 19, 20, 21).

If the ball goes in the middle, we might trap, depending on the offensive players involved and the situation (diagr. 22).

FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH TRAINING FOR BASKETBALL

by Rich Dalatri

Rich Dalatri returned for his second stint with the New Jersey Nets in 1997, having served in a similar capacity from 1987-92. He was the first full-time strength and conditioning coach in the NBA. He worked for the Cleveland Cavaliers, as well as in the Italian Division I League, for Caserta and Fortitudo Bologna. In 2001, he was named as the athletic coach for the Italian Men's National Team, who won the bronze medal at the 2003 European Championships, and the silver medal at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece.

Functional strength is becoming a way to train athletes in a way specific to the sport played. Functional strength is what I call exercises that are exact movements of our competition, but in an overloaded situation for a certain number of repetitions, and then immediately followed by repeating the movement in an overloaded state. By taking movements directly from game situations and replicating them in an overloaded state, you enhance that exact skill of the sport.

To train an exercise of functional strength you take the skill you want to work on and overload it with a medicine ball, elastic band, or weighted vest. You overload this movement for a series of 2-4 repetitions. These loaded repetitions are immediately followed by 1-2 repetitions of the skill in a regular unloaded state. By loading the muscles you elicit a much higher stimulation to the neuromuscular system. The contraction of the muscle must be stronger and more muscle fibers must be recruited to complete the task.

When you immediately unload the muscles they are ready to fight again the overload and deliver the same strong contraction, only now with no overload the movement is much faster and explosive than before. By training the muscles to this stronger more explosive response, they will adapt to moving at a higher level after the training effect takes place. You usually see results from this type of training in only a few weeks. You can train 2-4 times per week in this mode. We usually do 2 exercises per training session, with 8-12 repetitions per exercise.

PHOTO 1

This training is usually done during the off-season. If you do it during the competitive season, your repetitions must be reduced and I would do it 2 times per week.

Functional strength differs from the more traditional strength training, because you duplicate an exact movement from the sport.

In the weight room it is more development of absolute strength.

You are in a fixed movement pattern trying to go from point A to point B using as much weight as possible. Functional strength will develop athleticism and athletic ability to a higher level, because of the many factors involved in each exercise. First, the skill is improved, in addition, coordination of movement, strength, balance, and a heightened concentration to detail are also increased.

These exercises give you a good blend of all the qualities of athleticism, and can be done easily by all levels of athletes. The complexity of the exercise is what would change from an inexperienced athlete to an experienced athlete.

The key in this type of training is to not fatigue the muscle too much with the loaded reps, so, when it is unloaded, it can elicit a strong forceful repetition at higher speeds than the previous reps. Usually, I use:

▼ 2-4 loaded reps, followed by
▼ 1-2 unloaded.

This is very high quality work, which you do not want lactic acid build up in the muscles to slow the actions down.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

An example of this type of work is to put a player under the rim with a medicine ball of 12-16 pounds (5-7 kilograms). The player with outstretched arms taps the backboard 3-5 times, jumping as fast and high as possible. After the last tap, the medicine ball is immediately replaced with a regular basketball and it is dunked or shot from under the rim, as explosively as possible.

A drill can be as simple as running a short distance (10

PHOTO 2

PHOTO 3

yards, m. 3) being resisted by a strap and then released to run normally. An exercise that is of a higher level would be resisting a player doing a closeout and cutoff in a defensive situation in basketball (photo 1, 2, and 3).

Another example of this type of work is to put an elastic band around a player's waist. He starts at the elbow facing the basket with a ball. The player drives to the basket and dribbles with the resistance of the elastic. He returns back to the start as quickly as possible and repeats it 2 more times. On the 4th repetition the elastic is removed and he drives to the basket at top speed and lays the ball in.

Another positive of this training is that it is done on the same court that you play. You do not need any other space or facility.